

Adult Protective Services Facts for Health Professionals

- In Virginia, Adult Protective Services (APS) assists individuals who are age 60 or older and incapacitated adults ages 18-59 who have been abused, neglected, or exploited or may be at risk for abuse, neglect, exploitation.
- According to the National Center on Elder Abuse, it is estimated that for every one case of elder abuse, neglect, exploitation, or self-neglect reported to authorities, five or more cases go unreported.
- Health professionals can play an important role in identifying adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Health professionals are mandated reporters according to the *Code of Virginia*. This means that health professionals are required by law to report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of an elder or incapacitated adult to APS.
- If an adult is being abused, neglected, or exploited, he or she may not show up for appointments or may frequently change health care providers.
- Signs of abuse, neglect, or exploitation may include:
 - ✓ verbal abuse by a family member or caregiver
 - ✓ pain, bruising or bleeding in genital area
 - ✓ bone fractures
 - ✓ malnutrition
 - ✓ lesions
 - ✓ tooth fractures
 - ✓ hemorrhage
 - ✓ retinal detachment
 - ✓ inadequate clothing
 - ✓ cigarette burns
 - ✓ bites
 - ✓ delay in medical care
 - ✓ pharmaceuticals not being picked up
- Calls to APS may be made anonymously.
- APS can offer a wide variety of services to stop the abuse and prevent further mistreatment including: adult day care, counseling, emergency assistance and home support.

To contact adult protective services, call your local department of social services or the 24-hour toll-free hotline at
1-888-832-3858